



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CAVE DIVING

2006 - THIRD QUARTER SAFETY REPORT



United States – Alabama

No new regional diving to report this quarter. I will check into the Blue Springs cave system, in South Alabama, when my pace slackens a bit this winter. I've still heard nothing new from the team that dived and mapped part of it earlier. I've heard of other Karst features in the Blue Springs area. I will check on these when the cold sets in, if the river stays low. North Alabama has a few springs and sumps. I'm not familiar with that area, other than from stories and a few first hand reports. I reported on this last quarter. The most recent dives there were centered around the NSS convention. Steve Parker did some side mount exploration in the Conecuh National Forest a few years ago. He reported a small muddy cave, he laid a hundred or more feet of line in zero and near zero visibility. At his turn point he could find no suitable tie off, so turned and reeled out. He told me of a pond with surrounding Karst features, reported to drain on occasion? We discussed returning with a bottom finder and possibly diving it, depending on conditions. Seem to need eight thirty hour days, in each week!

- Report provided by Ken Paramore -

United States – California – Northern Region

Nothing to report from the Southern California region. There are no active cave sites in Southern California on the main land that we have found yet. Although I do keep trying every active flow piece of water that has any potential. We have some flooded mines and sea caves. There has not been any activity in any of them for some time. I would like to place some sign in the future if I can gain access to a boat that would get me there for free. Also, with the national park I would need to coordinate with them. When state funding increases there is a good chance we can do more. Right now, nothing to report.

- Report provided by Mark Grant -

United States – Florida – Suwannee Region

Current :

Madison Blue Springs:

Good news, the Stairs have been replaced. The new stairs are solid & well built, and a major safety upgrade. River is low, flow is moderate, vis is good.

Little River:

Water is very low, flow minimal, vis very good. New line is great. Harper tunnel line also good.

4th Quarter Plans:

Replace the Cavern line at Madison Blue, a good portion is buried in the sand.
Put in Distance Markers on the Gold Line in conjunction with the "Madison Cave Project". (a state permit to map Madison)
I will send you a copy of the plans after the next draft is approved.

Inspect more of the offshoot lines in Little river

- Report provided by Lance Ohl -

United States – Florida – Tallahassee Region

Safety report for Florida – Tallahassee Region

List of public dive-able caves in region: Merritt's Mill Pond cave systems in Marianna, Florida (Jackson Blue Springs, Twin Caves, Hole In The Wall, Shangri-La, Gator Hole and Indian Washtub)

Latest news: In anticipation of opening Emerald Sink as an entrance into the Leon Sinks cave system a group of cave volunteers has completed one weekend of construction work on a stairway system that will make for safe and ecologically sound access to Emerald Sink, located south of Tallahassee. More work has yet to be done and the final pieces put in place for public access, but the end is in sight. Emerald Sink is now owned by the State of Florida and managed by Wakulla Springs State Park.

- Report provided by Jeff Bauer -

United States – Midwest Region

Nothing that I am aware of to report at this time. There has been very little activity at the mines, and no activity at our no-mount systems.

- Report provided by Richard Dreher -

United States – New England Region

We finished and installed the safety warning stop sign in the 'well' entrance of Esperanza mine. This was the site of last years fatality. I bought a 2' square piece of 1/8 inch aluminum, cut it to fit, and bolted the plastic sign board to it with stainless carriage bolts. We bolted that to a short piece of 2" pvc, stuck it in a 1' by 2', 8" high pine box, and poured it full of concrete. This is a pretty heavy traffic area, so we decided to make the install beefy. Hopefully, it will hold up.

Thanks to the NACD for the sign.

As far as sites go, I don't know of anything else, besides a rare sump dive, being done in the area. Other places are enforced no trespass, or are remote access.

Esperanza is in West Rutland, Vermont., and is also referred to as True Blue.

- Report provided by Scott Robinson -

Austria

From official side all our sites are closed. So there is nothing to report and nothing happened. There is some diving there – but not legal. At the moment we go to caves in Hungary or Slovenia.

- Report provided by Horst Schmid –

Bahamas

Grand Bahama Island.

Lucayan Caves National Park

Cavern diving only with Bahamas National Trust certified guides.

Currently closed to cave divers without a 'scientific permit'. Initiating discussions to create BNT cave guide program.

Old Freetown System

Mermaid's Lair

First 200ft of cave line replaced and rerouted to follow the original explorer's route after line was removed and rerouted in mid 90's.

New route will hopefully reduce impact on cave formations. Approx. 20 snapped stalagmites glued back into place using an underwater epoxy, received an opinion from an academic chemist that no environmentally damaging emissions would occur. Many more needing repair.

Owl's Hole

Kermantile line donated by the NACD installed as a permanent cavern line, great cavern dive with views from max. depth of 65 ft back to surface, large amount of percolation suggest small, infrequent groups in one way travel. Original 45ft steel ladder removed after rung breakage. Currently being repaired by NACD volunteers.

Sweeting's Cay

Sagitaris

Absolutely stunning cave. Good guideline installed by 'Team Karst', however two previous guidelines installed in the 80's consisting of thick, floating polypropylene need removing. On my “to-do” list.

It has struck me how closely 'safety' and 'conservation' are related especially regarding the routing of guidelines through delicate systems, and was wondering if a broadening of the scope of the 'safety officers' would benefit both the caves and the reputation of the NACD.

- Report Provided by Ben Cook -

Mexico – Akumal/Tulum Region

Please find the following attachment (Attachment 1) as requested concerning the cave systems in my area which are deemed relevant in so far as safety is concerned. The format is a Word Document. I have also 6 signs of all steel construction to be placed at the following sites when I get through the politics involved. The sites are as follows:

Chac Mool
Dos Ojos (two)
Temple of Doom
Carwash
Grand Cenote

When I have gotten permission to erect them I would like to write an article about it and acknowledge the persons who helped me in this endeavor.

- Report Provided by Chuck Stevens -

Mexico – Cozumel

Nothing to report this time. No accidents and no incidents in Cozumel caves.

The list of sites we have on the island are:

Aerolito de Paraiso
La Quebrada cave system. (9 cenotes) in this system.
Cocodrilo cave system (2 cenotes in this system)
Tres Potrillos sinkhole
Bambu Sinkhole
Xcan Ha sinkhole
Dos coronas

The lines are in constant change. all of them have stop signs on the cavern zone.

- Report provided by German Yañez -

South East Asia

New safety officer is being considered.

Reports have been compiled by Richard Dreher – NACD International Safety Director

For the regions that are not listed, a safety report was not received.

Attachment 1

Cave systems of Quintana Roo, Mexico

The following list is a compilation of the most significant cave systems in the state of Quintana Roo starting at a point just south of Puerto Aventuras and following the interstate highway 307 towards the town of Tulum. From there the list follows the Coba highway till kilometre 8 and finally from Tulum south back on the 307. All the important systems are named in reference to the safety and well being of the diving public. Many other smaller and insignificant caves are in the area but are not worthy of mention in the report as they do not represent areas that the regular public would visit due to logistical problems - i.e. large distances from roads requiring horses and sherpas, and/or areas closed to the public. All the systems mentioned below are controlled in one way or another by private land owners and pretty much all require an entry fee to be paid to either snorkel or dive. I have also highlighted the systems which offer cavern diving as well as cave diving; the aforementioned bringing in the most monetary value for the land owners.

- Systema Chac Mool *
- Actun Koh
- Kantunchi
- Chikin Ha *
- Xtabay
- Systema Eden (Ponderosa) *
- Cenote Azul
- Systema Minotaura
- Systema Taj Mahal *
- Cenote 27 Steps
- Actun Chen

- Cenote Chemuyil
- Systema Dos Ojos *
- Mundo Escondido (Hidden Worlds)
- Systema Nohoch Nah Chich
- Labna Ha
- Balancanche
- Tankah Cenote *
- Systema Abejas
- Systema Naval
- Temple of Doom *
- Systema Sac Actun
- Grand Cenote *
- Kalimba
- Cenote Calavera (Skull Cave)
- Vaca Ha
- Tortuga
- Systema Carwash *
- Ak Tulum
- Systema Naharon
- Systema Maya Blue
- Angelita
- Systema Ox Bel Ha